

## Special to the News

### Angels Needed!

As a 25-year veteran arts administrator in Florida, I am shocked and astounded by the recent veto of all arts funding through the Florida Division of Arts & Culture. For Martin County organizations alone, this represents 9 grant requests totaling over \$500,000 that will now not be granted.

As recently as 2023, Florida ranked an impressive 11th in the nation for arts spending, granting \$55 million to organizations across the state. This 100% veto drops Florida to 50th in the nation, which is shameful considering we are the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest state in the nation and growing every day.

As a community, we must be vigilant in protecting our vital arts community. The arts contribute to so many aspects of the vibrant quality of life we, as Martin County residents, have come to expect, anticipate and enjoy.

Key Facts to Consider:

- **\$9 goes into the local economy for every \$1 invested in Arts & Culture by Florida.** *That's a substantial return on investment.*
- **Florida is home to over 90,000 arts-related businesses that paid \$3.7 billion in Florida resident household income.** *The arts create and support jobs.*
- **Florida's audience spending outpaces the national average with Florida's tourists spending an average of \$89.16 whereas the national average is \$60.57.** *Culture drives tourism.*
- **Over 63 million Floridians and tourists participate annually in arts and culture activities. 63% of audience members surveyed in the AEP6 study said that arts and culture help them to better understand others in their community.** *Arts and culture engage and connect our people in our communities.*
- **High School students who have 4 years of art, dance, drama, or music curriculum score higher on their SATs, have higher GPAs and are more likely to graduate.** *Arts education programming builds better students, and highly engaged youth.*

How can you help? Make a donation to MartinArts, and any (or all) of the other arts and cultural organizations that have been affected by this devastating situation. We need angels to survive this storm and allow us to be resilient for the future. Gifts of any and all sizes are welcome, and we are certainly open to gifts that build our endowment. Without a renewed commitment from all aspects of our community, the risk of arts programming vanishing is possible.

To reverse this trend, and keep growing the arts for our bright future filled with new and expanded arts experiences, meaningful large gifts are needed now to sustain these long time beloved institutions:

- MartinArts: [https://www.martinarts.org/support\\_us/donate\\_now.html](https://www.martinarts.org/support_us/donate_now.html)
- Historical Society of Martin County (Elliott Museum & House of Refuge): <https://hsmc-fl.com/donate/>
- Martin Artisans Guild: <https://martinartisansguild.org/donate>
- The Children's Museum of the Treasure Coast: <https://www.childrensmuseumtc.org/donate>
- Treasure Coast Community Singers: <https://www.tccsingers.org/>
- Atlantic Classical Orchestra: <https://atlanticclassicalorchestra.com/>

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nancy K. Turrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy K. Turrell, Executive Director  
MartinArts